

VZCZCXRO7530
PP RUEHLMC
DE RUEHLP #0522/01 0662025
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 062025Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6748
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 7680
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 5043
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 8954
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 6169
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3383
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN 0631
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3610
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 3907
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 5311
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO 0311
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 6012
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0635
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 0983
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 2196
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0980
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LA PAZ 000522

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS DEPT OF AGRICULTURE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/07/2018

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS PRODUCTION/MICROENTERPRISE
MINISTER

Classified By: Ambassador Philip Goldberg for reasons 1.4 (b),(d).

SUMMARY

1. (C) The Ambassador, accompanied by USAID Deputy Director, and Emboff, met with the new Minister of Production and Microenterprise Dr. Javier Hurtado Mercado on March 5. Dr. Hurtado is an accomplished businessman and also a member of the USAID-Quinoa Global Development Alliance. During the meeting, Minister Hurtado pledged to work closely with USAID, attract international investment, and serve as a bridge between social movements and the Bolivian business establishment. He also said he has instructed his staff to draw up a "technical trade proposal" with the United States. End summary.

MINISTER'S GOALS

2. (C) Minister Hurtado acknowledged his good relationship with the Embassy and his work with the USAID-Quinoa Global Development Alliance. He told the Ambassador that "the organic market is key" and that he wants to work with USAID to expand the quinoa program. USAID Deputy Director noted that he Ambassador signed a major three year organics initiative with the Government of Bolivia in October 2007. Dr. Hurtado would like Bolivia to expand into other organic markets such as coffee and llama meat. He also believes there is a market for biodiesel fuels made from quinoa. The Minister also wants to improve IPR protections, attract foreign investment, and bridge the gap between social movements and the Bolivian business establishment.

Throughout the meeting, Hurtado repeatedly said he wants to work with USAID in his capacity as minister.

CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE US

¶3. (C) When the Ambassador stated that constant attacks by President Morales and other cabinet members made a smooth working relationship extremely difficult, Minister Hurtado acknowledged the GOB's negative political rhetoric against the USG is an impediment. Hurtado tried to explain by saying that "Evo is under a lot of pressure." The Minister said "the best way for us to get closer is by doing business together." He told the Ambassador he would like to work with the Mission to expand USAID programs and to attract foreign investment, adding, "I hope things will improve with us."

TRADE PROPOSAL?

¶4. (C) Hurtado wants to get to the point of "not worrying about ATPA." The minister said he understood that it was not the Bolivian government's efforts that got ATPA benefits extended. He told the Ambassador that he has instructed the Viceminister of Exports to draw up a "technical trade proposal," admitting that the Morales government has yet to offer any detailed trade agreement. The Ambassador said we would welcome such a proposal, although the trade environment in Washington is highly uncertain.

LA PAZ 00000522 002 OF 002

COMMENT

¶5. (C) This is Hurtado's second time in the Morales government, having previously resigned as the Bolivian Director of MCC due to lack of support from the Morales administration. Post has had good relations with Hurtado and views him as one of Evo's more moderate cabinet members. He is a businessman and has extensive dealing with American corporations. His desire to continue to work with, and even expand, USAID programs is encouraging. End comment.
GOLDBERG